

Message Text

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PAGE 01 BRASIL 02427 021328Z

43

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C O N F I D E N T I A L BRASILIA 2427

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TAGS: PFOR, UN, BR

SUBJECT: AMBASSADOR BENNETT'S CONSULTATIONS ON UN

1. AMBASSADOR BENNETT SPENT LONG, USEFUL MORNING MARCH 31 AT FOREIGN MINISTRY, MEETING WITH SECRETARY GENERAL AND KEY OFFICIALS IN UN AND ECONOMIC AFFAIRS FOR FRANK, FORTHCOMING TALKS. BRAZILIANS DISPLAYED LIVELY INTEREST IN WHAT HAPPENED AT LIMA UNIDO CONFERENCE, AND BENNETT GAVE THEM UN-DOWN, EMPHASIZING US REASONS FOR PARAGRAPH-BY-PARAGRAPH VOTE. BRAZILIANS APPEARED EASILY UNDERSTAND THAT NO REAL CONSENSUS EXISTED, BUT HAD OWN THOUGHTS ON HOW TO HANDLE THIS PROBLEM (SEE BELOW).

2. SYNTHESIS OF BRAZILIAN VIEWS FOLLOWS: UN HAS SHOWN ITSELF TO BE, AND WILL CONTINUE TO BE, USEFUL SOUNDING BOARD EFFECTIVE AT DETECTING TRENDS. PROLIFERATION OF MEETINGS IS PROBLEM, BUT MEETINGS SERVE USEFUL PURPOSE OF KEEPING ISSUES ALIVE, ESPECIALLY ECONOMIC ISSUES FOR WHICH NO REAL SOLUTION IS IN SIGHT. AMONG LDC'S IN MULTILATERAL FORUMS, DOMINATION OF MODERATES BY MILITANTS IS UNFORTUNATE, ALTHOUGH POLITICAL HISTORY SUGGESTS THIS VIRTUALLY INEVITABLE. (NOTE: IN THIS CONNECTION, SECRETARY GENERAL GUERREIRO, A VETERAN OF 18 RPT 18 UNGA'S, DECLARED BRAZIL WILLNOT JOIN THE NON-ALIGNED GROUP BUT FINDS THE GROUP OF 77 USEFUL: HE LAMENTED, HOWEVER, THE TENDENCYOF THE NAG TO TAKE OVER THE G-77, AT LEAST IN UNGA'S.) BRAZIL IS NOT CONFORTABLE WITH MANY OF THE STANDS AND
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PAGE 02 BRASIL 02427 021328Z

MUCH OF THE LANGUAGE WHICH EMERBE AS "CONSENSUS" POSITIONS, BUT FINDS

IT VERY HARD TO PUT FORWARD MINORITY VIEWS; IT SOMETIMES CAN, BUT RISKS OF MISINTERPRETATION ARE GREAT, SO BRAZIL TENDS TO JOIN "CONSENSUS"; IT MAY TRY TO MODERATE THAT CONSENSUS, BUT IT GOES ALONG. THE CASE, AT LEAST SO FAR, OF THE IRON-ORE EXPORTERS' ASSOCIATION SHOWS THAT IT CAN BE EFFECTIVE TO WORK FROM WITHIN TO PRODUCE RELATIVELY MODERATE RESULTS.

3. IN ANY EVENT, THE BRAZILIANS CONTENDED, THERE IS LITTLE CHOICE BUT TO LIVE WITH POLITICAL REALITY, WHICH SUGGESTS ONE SHOULD NOT WORRY TOO MUCH ABOUT WHAT IS, AFTER ALL, ONLY LANGUAGE. IT IS THE TENDENCY OF MANY TO GO ALONG, OR APPEAR TO GO ALONG, OR AT LEAST TO AVOID APPEARING NEGATIVE, AS LONG AS THEY OR POSITIONS IMPORTANT TO THEM ARE NOT FRONTALLY ASSAULTED. THIS IMPLIES A NEW DEFINITION OF CONSENSUS AS BEING MINIMAL AND NON- BINDING. GOB TENDS VIEW EACH DOCUMENT OR DECLARATION AS A STEP IN A PROCESS; CHARTER REVISION IS INEVITABLE, BUT THE (DRAFT) CHARTER OF 1975 WILL BE FOLLOWED BY THAT OF 1976, AND SO ON, AND EACH NEW DRAFT MUST REFLECT A GROWING APPRECIATION OF NUANCES.

4.COMMENT: ALTHOUGH THEY DID NOT SAY SO IN SO MANY WORDS, IT IS CLEAR THAT BRAZILIANS' POINTS ABOUT ABOUT TAKING RELAXED ATTITUDE ON LANGUAGE AND SEEING CONSENSUS AS NON-BINDING HAD AT LEAST PARTIAL PURPOSE OF ADVICE TO US. THEY NOTED, PARTICULARLY, THAT THE SOCIALIST BLOC MANAGES TO GIVE THE APPEARANCE OF GREATER FLEXIBILITY, OR AT LEAST OF NOT BEING NEGATIVE. AS THESE POINTS AROSE DURING CONVERSATIONS, BENNETT NOTED THEM WITH INTEREST BUT ALSO POINTED OUT USG TAKES WORKS SERIOUSLY AND FEELS BOUND TO HONOR ITS COMMITMENTS. HE ALSO NOTED INSISTENCE ON "CONSENSUS" HAS ATTENDANT PROBLEM OF PAPERING OVER REAL DIFFERENCES.
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